(b) and (c) The requests of these State Governments are being examined, in consultation with the Ministry of Law.

Migration of Indian doctors

951. SHRI THANGA TAMIL SELVAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of large scale migration of Indian doctors abroad;

(b) whether Government propose to check such migration in order to improve health services in the country;

(c) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken in this regard; and

(d) the number of doctors settled abroad during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) to (d) As per the provisions of the Emigration Act 1983, Medical Doctors, alongwith some other categories of persons have been placed under "Emigration check not required" (ECNR) category and have been exempted from seeking emigration clearance to go abroad. Hence no centralized record about emigration of Indian doctors to foreign countries is maintained. There is currently no proposal to check migration of Indian doctors to foreign countries.

As per information available with the Government, a total of 6,04,489 Allopathic doctors were registered with the Medical Council of India till March, 2003. Besides there are around six lakhs Indian Systems of Medicine and Homoeopathic doctors registered with their respective Councils. The norm for availability of doctors to the population in the country has been recommended to be as 1:2000 by the Bhore Committee. As per information with the Medical Council of India, the availability of Allopathic doctors is at present in the ratio of 1:1800. If the practitioners of Indian System of Medicine and Homoeopathy are also taken into account, the ratio of availability of doctors to the population improves further. Though there is no shortage in the aggregate number of doctors produced, there is a geographical and speciality-wise imbalance in the availability of doctors.